

## Context

Internal auditing is “an independent, objective assurance and advisory service designed to add value and improve an organisation’s operations. It helps an organisation accomplish its objective by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control, and governance processes”.<sup>1</sup>

In order for the council to comply with the best value duty to secure continuous improvement in the way the functions are exercised, it must take appropriate measures to gain assurance both of the performance of its services and of its corporate governance. Through a focus on effective assurance, it can mitigate the risks and costs of failure and their impacts on local residents and businesses.<sup>2</sup>

An internal audit strategy is essential for aligning internal audit activities with the professional practice of internal audit and organisational objectives. The Global Internal Audit Standards require the Head of Internal Audit to develop and implement an internal audit strategy and specifies what should be included.<sup>1</sup>

## Our Vision

To be seen as a valued critical friend for the provision of assurance and advice throughout the council, whose opinion and insight is sought after and respected.

## Our Goals

- Provide economical, efficient, and effective, independent, objective assurance and advisory service, conformant with the Global Standards<sup>1</sup>
- Add value by helping the council accomplish its corporate priorities, statutory responsibilities, and best value duty of continuous improvement

## Our Values

- Professional values: Independence; Objectivity; Competency; and Confidentiality<sup>1</sup>
- Corporate values: People; Pride; Passion; and Personal responsibility

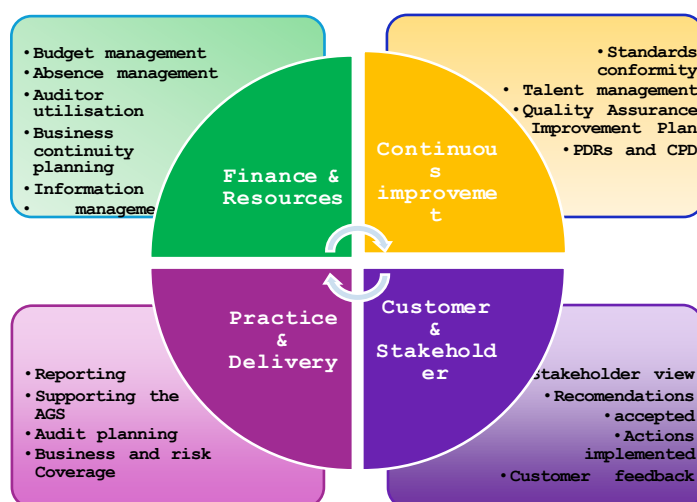
## Our Strategies

- Investing in our people to develop our talent and capabilities
- Achieving economies of scale and service resilience, through income generation and partnership working
- Exploring and embracing technological developments to enhance our service
- Engaging with our stakeholders to understand their assurance needs and expectations, and adapting our practice to meet those needs

## Our Strengths

- Conformance with our professional Standards<sup>1</sup> is embedded in our processes and practice
- Broad range of relevant skills and qualifications
- Over 140 years of collective internal audit experience
- Strong team spirit and commitment to public service and continuous improvement
- Sharing good practice and organisational learning
- Visible and influential at a regional level, chairing a variety of audit groups
- Stable external client base and income streams

## Success Factors



## Supporting Initiatives

- Complete a thorough gap analysis between existing practice and the new audit Standards<sup>1</sup>, and implement the changes required
- Continue embedding assurance mapping across the council and integrating it with our practice
- Enhance resilience in client relationship management, realigning responsibilities within the team
- Review our talent to identify any single points of failure, consider the resilience needed, prioritise, and develop a plan aligned with PDR and recruitment processes
- Maintain capacity by filling any vacant posts promptly
- Develop our understanding and capabilities in the use of artificial intelligence
- Develop and utilise intelligence from the Counter Fraud and Insurance teams to inform our planning & reporting
- Promote the work of the team, and its strategic role and accomplishments in supporting continuous improvement within the council
- Refresh internal audit elements of the council’s training material

<sup>1</sup> [Institute of Internal Auditors, Global Internal Audit Standards](#)

<sup>2</sup> [LGA, Improvement and Assurance Framework for Local Government](#)